

SENATOR VICKERS: Mr. President, and members, I think the issue is pretty clear. It is true, the hour is getting late. We are at the end of the session but we have talked an awful lot on this floor this session about how important property tax was, how important property tax relief was. Well, let me tell you one thing just so it makes it clear. Senator DeCamp said this is a first cousin and I thought Senator Schmit's analogy was probably pretty close, yes, it probably is a first cousin. No question about it, but I made it clear at the outset what my intentions was or what my intentions were as far as this particular bill is concerned, what my intentions were as far as the tax rates were concerned. I would like all of you to remember, those of you that were here last year and made the determination that we, as a Legislature, would set the tax rates. I would like all of you to ask yourselves, have we, the Legislature, really set those tax rates. I suggest we haven't. I know I have talked to a lot of you individually who have indicated that, you know, they really didn't want...really didn't want the tax rates to be where the bill says it is but we have had some pressure. We felt some pressure because the Governor indicated where the tax rates should be in order to fund the budget at this level and we have all gone along like a bunch of little sheep. Well, I suggest to you that if we really are serious about addressing the property taxpayers problem, then we have got to recognize (Tape D ends and Tape E begins with no overlap) we have got to raise the funds to do it somehow. Now Senator DeCamp indicated that if 341 passes, and if we use this mechanism, it is going to be ten times as high down the road. I don't think that is true at all. I think this level of funding that we have got or level of taxation would well be able to fund it on into the future which I think the people of this state would rather have, a stable tax rate rather than one that goes up and down like a yo-yo. I would like to think that this Legislature this year was serious when we talked on this floor on 994 and other bills about how important property tax relief was and that is what this is. It is not for education. It is not in order to increase the amount of education or anything of that nature. It is simply property tax relief. I would like to give the rest of my time, Mr. President, to Senator Warner if he would like any of it.